



## State of Wisconsin \ GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

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FILE REF: MDMS

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Jon Heberer - Commerce  
Mark Werner - DHFS  
Mike Lemcke - DNR  
Madeline Gotkowitz - WGNHS  
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Cody Cook - DATCP  
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Bill Bristoll - WGNHS  
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FROM: Tim Asplund - DNR

Berni Mattsson  
COMMERCE

The purpose of this memo is to summarize the actions of the Groundwater Coordinating Council (GCC) **Monitoring & Data Management Subcommittee** (MDMS) at its meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Subcommittee members present were: Jeff Helmuth (chair), Randell Clark, Jon Heberer, Cody Cook, Bruce Rheineck, Dave Mechenich, Chuck Dunning, Jason Smith, and Tim Asplund.

Dan Scudder  
DOT

Kathy Pielsticker  
DATCP

1. **Introductions and General Business** – Introductions were made. Chuck Dunning introduced Jason Smith, a new hydrologist with USGS who will be working with the water use program and the groundwater level observation network. Jason will also be taking Chuck's place on the Subcommittee.

(Vacant)  
GOVERNOR'S REP.

2. **Revised MDMS charge and functions** - Tim Asplund reported that the GCC had approved some changes to the structure of its subcommittees. The main change was discontinuing the Planning & Mapping Subcommittee and splitting its functions between the Local Government Subcommittee and MDMS. As a result, several of the members of the Planning and Mapping Subcommittee have joined the MDMS. Hopefully these changes will help improve communication about groundwater data management, GIS, and mapping topics. The other change has to do with the structure of the MDMS. Because of the expanded scope of the Subcommittee and the increased emphasis on monitoring, Jeff and Tim have proposed creating 2 "work groups" - one with a Data Management and Mapping focus and one with a Monitoring focus. In practice, the focus of the quarterly MDMS meetings will alternate between these 2 work groups or topics. The idea is for each member to attend the meetings that pertain to their "assigned" work group, but have the option to attend the other meetings depending upon interest in the agenda, time and inclination. The Subcommittee was generally supportive of this approach. Chuck suggested keeping each work group informed of the activities and discussion of the other group. Bruce Rheineck suggested having one meeting a year where both work groups met together, perhaps in March. Tim noted that everyone would continue to receive agendas and minutes for each meeting.

3. **DNR Water Monitoring Strategy** - Jeff Helmuth reported on the recently released DNR Water Monitoring Strategy ([http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/MonitoringStrategy\\_13\\_V1WEB\\_2-4-05.pdf](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/MonitoringStrategy_13_V1WEB_2-4-05.pdf)). Jeff noted that the strategy was initially intended to bring disparate monitoring needs together from two different programs, but that it became an opportunity to pull together all water monitoring activities from throughout the agency. Jeff noted that there are now 8 subteams working on implementation of the strategy, including one for groundwater. He also noted that the Groundwater

Monitoring Strategy developed by the GCC monitoring work group was used and incorporated into the larger water strategy. In the process, the groundwater strategy itself was updated and revised. (This revised strategy was provided to the Subcommittee electronically in advance of the meeting.) One of the main changes was adding groundwater modeling updates to the budget to reflect needs related to groundwater quantity. The Subcommittee suggested adding some text or description to the strategy about this budget item, perhaps adding a separate component for modeling. Jeff asked for any additional comments and suggestions by the end of March.

4. **Nitrate in Wisconsin's Groundwater** - Tim presented some preliminary maps and summaries of nitrate occurrence and exceedence rates that the DNR's groundwater section is putting together in preparation for a "Condition of the Resource Report." Most of the data is being compiled from the Groundwater Retrieval Network (private wells) or the Drinking Water System (public, non-community wells). Results are being plotted by county and by township in terms of numbers of wells exceeding the 10 mg/L enforcement standard. Efforts are also being made to look at trends of nitrate concentration or exceedence rates over time using data from wells that are sampled repeatedly. Maps and charts from other sources are being compiled, as well as information on treatment costs for municipal water systems that have exceeded the ES. The Subcommittee made a number of suggestions for analyzing and presenting the data, such as dividing the state by water basin or legislative boundaries, looking at trends in exceedence rates over time by township, and doing a categorical analysis of concentration rather than treating it as a continuous variable. Dave Mechenich expressed interest in comparing estimates of county and township based excellence rates from the Groundwater Center database with those generated from GRN. Jon Heberer also suggested focusing in on specific case studies, problem wells, or certain categories of wells to do more detailed analyses.
5. **Update on FY06 Joint Solicitation for Groundwater Proposals** - Tim reported that the funding situation had brightened somewhat for the DNR this year, and that it would be supporting 8.5 projects. Several of these have to do with springs and data needs tied to the quantity legislation. On the other hand, the UW System funding was a bit more tenuous, with additional budget cuts and overhead costs to be absorbed by the already limited funds. The GRAC had recommended 8 projects for funding, but it was uncertain at this time what the final outcome would be. Tim noted that the UW would be revisiting its priorities next year in light of tighter budgets, and possibly narrowing the intent of the groundwater research funds in the solicitation package.
6. **Diamino-atrazine ELISA study follow-up sampling** - Bruce provided an update on this interagency effort to assess whether to enhance or replace the existing "triazine screen" with an ELISA kit that detects the diamino metabolite. The original SLOH study found that the diamino ELISA test not only accurately measured the level of diamino-atrazine as determined by GC, but that it also closely predicted the GC TCR concentration when used in conjunction with the existing atrazine ELISA. The follow-up sampling has shown that using both ELISA kits together achieves the best results, but that this ends up having a higher cost. The main issue, then, is whether homeowners would be willing to pick up the additional cost of having a more quantitative and less uncertain result. One way to express the benefits of switching to a higher cost test would be in terms of the level of certainty that it achieves in comparison to the old test. The agencies involved are continuing to collect and run samples with the two kits to enhance the database. Ultimately, the goal is to decide whether to add the diamino-atrazine ELISA to our screening tool kit and to develop guidance for interpreting the results.
7. **Agency Monitoring and Data Management Updates:**

DNR:

- Jeff noted that the DNR had requested 5 positions in the Governor's budget to help implement the groundwater quantity legislation. In addition, the first meeting of the Groundwater Advisory Committee was scheduled for April 1<sup>st</sup>. Two science work groups have been appointed to assist the committee in its work. (See <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/gac/index.htm>)
- Randell Clark reported that the well notification and fee collection system for new wells was to go into effect on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Well owners will be issued a tracking number that will have to be recorded on well construction reports. The DNR is working with drillers to notify them of the new system. Randell also reported that a January 2005 update to the Well Data CD was available.

#### Commerce

- Jon reported that Commerce was developing a tracking system for identifying sites with occurrences of VOCs, MTBE, and other oxygenates. He suggested that the monitoring work group may want to take up this topic at a future meeting - are oxygenates something that needs to be monitored more systematically?

#### DATCP

- Bruce reported that DATCP was holding hearings on new nutrient management rules in March.
- Cody Cook noted that he was making some changes to the DATCP groundwater monitoring database to incorporate new monitoring data.

#### USGS

- Chuck noted that the entire groundwater monitoring network (106 wells) was now included in USGS's annual data report. He also reported that USGS and WGNHS would be doing site visits over the next 2 years on about half of the wells in the network, which are maintained by "volunteers" from county and local cooperators. Many of these wells have not been visited for a long time, and this will be an opportunity to test and revamp wells and retrain the volunteers.

#### Groundwater Center

- Dave said that the Center's drinking water programs were starting up again, and that a full schedule was planned this year. The Center is also sending out summary packets to counties that have participated in the program in the past to remind them of the opportunity to participate again.

8. **Set Next Meeting Date and Adjourn** - The next meeting of the MDMS is scheduled for Wednesday, June 8 at 9:30 AM to noon in Room 266 at DATCP. The focus of the meeting will be primarily on data sharing and database management issues, including further discussion of the nitrate report and the new well notification requirements.

cc: GCC members

Bob Pearson - DOT

Chuck Warzecha - DHFS

Bill Batten - WGNHS

Harold Stanlick - Commerce

Laura Chern - DNR

Chuck Dunning - USGS